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ART. II.—*Report by Mr. J. P. KENNEDY, from the Committee on Commerce. Read and laid upon the Table in the House of Representatives, May 28th, 1842.* Twenty-seventh Congress, Second Session. 8vo. pp. 63.

THERE are few themes which afford a more copious subject for remark and self-gratulation to the men of the present day than the increased facilities of transportation upon the land, and the extent to which the principal powers of the earth have pushed their adventures upon the sea. In view of the latter, it seems scarcely credible, that, until the middle of the fifteenth century, no mariner of Europe had dared to lose sight of his own coast; but such is the record of history. The change has been wonderful, indeed. “Go where I will,” says the Briton, “my country’s flag has preceded me”; and “go where *I* will,” says the American, “that of *my* country is no stranger.” These flags are now worn by five millions of tons of merchant ships, and a half million of tons of armed ones; but on the accession of queen Elizabeth, the whole marine of England did not exceed that recently owned at the commercial capital of her colony of New Brunswick; while at the close of her reign, the new world did not possess a single vessel, nor a single seaman of the Saxon race.

Whatever the advance of the English shipping interest may have been during the reigns of James, and of his ill-fated son Charles, the task devolved upon Cromwell to place it on a broad and lasting basis. This he accomplished by the Navigation Act. Those who blame as well as those who admire the Protector, unite in praise of his genius, and in the opinion that this sagacious law is a monument worthy of his fame. That he alone devised it, none, as far as we know, attempt to show. The two rival claimants are St. John and Downing. The evidence adduced in favor of the latter is strong, if not convincing. But it is by no means certain, that its conception belongs to either, though the act could hardly have found a place upon the statute-book, without the determined support of both.\* Sir George Downing was an

\* Those who desire to pursue the inquiry as to the origin of this measure, without the toil of consulting original authorities, will find some inter-

inhabitant of Salem, and a member of the first class that graduated at Harvard University.

Whatever his character may have been, it is admitted on all hands, that his talents were great, and that his influence with Cromwell, after he removed from America, was controlling. At most, New England owes his memory nothing but silence. But her strong men of the revolutionary era regarded it with utter detestation. His name was identified with a measure, which, whether he designed it so or not, wronged his native country, until she acquired strength to resist and overturn it. It is affirmed by some, that the aim of Cromwell, in passing the Navigation Act, was "empire," and not "commerce." Even if it were so, — if "empire" was the end sought, his vision could have seen no means so certain as "commerce" whereby to attain it. But whatever were the motives of this extraordinary man, and whatever the secret or avowed purposes of those who shared in his counsels, something to relieve the distresses and encourage the growth of English navigation was indispensable. The Dutch crowded the ports of England and of the world, while English vessels decayed in idleness. *To compel the merchants to import and to export in ships of the realm* was a measure that promised all that was desired, and such was the leading object of the Navigation Act. The scheme was simple, comprehensive, and magnificent. But the sending away of domestic, and the bringing home of foreign, products in English bottoms, navigated by Englishmen, were not to be accomplished by a mere declaration upon parchment. The merchants opposed the plan, because it required them to adjust the machinery of their business anew ; and the Dutch opposed it, because, if carried out, their supremacy upon the sea would come to an end. In a word, few "experiments" encountered more obstacles ; few have succeeded so well.\*

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esting matter relating to it in Tudor's *Life of Otis*, page 75. There is also an elaborate and very able article, which maintains the pretensions of Sir George Downing, in *Hunt's Magazine*, Vol. 4, page 393, from the pen of the Rev. Charles W. Upham. Bancroft differs from the opinions expressed by Tudor, and from the argument of Upham, inasmuch as he ascribes the Navigation Act to St. John.

\* In 1660, the amount of British tonnage is said to have been only 95,236. In 1774, it was 1,136,262. In 1660, British commerce is said also to have employed *four* tons of foreign, to *one* of national ships ; but in 1750, it employed *twelve* tons of British, to *one* ton of foreign. M'Culloch dissents from the opinion defended in the text, doubting whether the Navigation Act has had the influence ascribed to it in promoting the growth of British shipping.

But success was obtained only after fierce contentions and desolating wars. In our day, the adoption of a new policy, or the opening of some untried channel of trade, gives an instantaneous impulse to commerce, and increases the number of ships with astonishing rapidity. Such, however, were not the immediate effects of the Navigation Act. At the Restoration, when its great principle was adopted and reenacted by Charles, though the revenue from imports exceeded two millions of dollars, the Dutch fishermen nearly excluded those of England from their own waters ; while the Dutch merchantmen retained a large share of the trade of Europe, India, South America, and even of our own country. But at the close of the century, we find the revenue from imports nearly doubled, and the amount of English tonnage very considerable. Still, the whole mercantile marine of the kingdom did not much exceed that now owned in the city of Boston ; while it fell short, by a third, of that now belonging to the city of New York ; was only about four times as great as that of the district of Bath in Maine, and less than five times larger than that of Portland in the same State.

But to trace the progress of the navigation of England, from era to era, until we reach the present time, when it amounts nearly to three millions of tons, forms no part of our purpose. Our sole aim is, to show the effects of her commercial bearing towards us — whether as her colonies, or a sovereignty like herself ; and to consider our own commercial policy, and the condition of the great interests which it designs to protect. And we remark at the outset, that the British Navigation Act and the Laws of Trade, which were a part of the system it was meant to enforce, contained the germs of the American Revolution. The Stamp Act and other measures of a kindred nature have been made, we think, to occupy too prominent a place among the causes assigned for that event. The irritation which the duties on stamps excited in the planting colonies subsided as soon as the law which imposed them was repealed ; and we submit that, but for the policy which oppressed the commerce and inhibited the use of the water-falls of New England, the “dispute” between the mother and her children would have been “left,” as Washington breathed a wish that it might be, “to posterity to determine.”

While Cromwell lived, colonial trade was free ; but after

his death, New England soon felt the difference between a Puritan and a Stuart. The duties of poundage and tonnage were first imposed, and upon the creation of a board of commissioners of Trade and Plantations in 1671, measures were adopted to restrain and regulate American commerce, which already extended to the principal countries of Europe. To enforce obedience, however, by mere instructions to the governors, when the people were so distant and so ill disposed to yield it, was impossible ; though it seems that Governor Winslow, of Plymouth Colony, was considered "a loyal gentleman," and he expressed his dislike of the "carriage" of the Boston people, for their "daily breach of the laws concerning trade and navigation," and for "trading with, and encouraging all nations to trade with them." Upon the complaints of the merchants and manufacturers of England, that these laws continued to be disregarded, the governors of the colonies were again, in 1676, enjoined to enforce them ; while, to subdue the refractory spirit of New England, it was determined that Mediterranean "passes," to protect her vessels from the Turks, should be withheld until she humbled herself, and until it was seen, whether "the custom-house officers were received" there in as kindly a manner as elsewhere.

The year 1679 is memorable as being the period when Edward Randolph landed at Boston, commissioned to be the first collector, surveyor, and searcher of Massachusetts and the other maritime colonies of the north. He was treated with aversion and contempt. The next year after his arrival, he wrote to the king, that "the Bostoneers," as he called them, disregarded as much as ever the acts which were designed to bridle their commerce ; "whereby," said he, "your majesty is damnified in the customs one hundred thousand pounds sterling yearly, and the kingdom much more." Bradstreet replied to this and other falsehoods ; averring, upon this point, that there had "never been five thousand pounds irregularly traded by the merchants of Boston in a year." That Randolph knew he uttered base lies, both then and afterwards, seems undeniable. But what was truth — what were the interests — of the people who earned their bread in storms, compared with the favor of *that* Stuart, whose own dislike towards them needed no stimulant, no obsequious slave, to urge him to perfect the ruin of every

branch of their industry. Charles and his vile official soon brought matters to a crisis, and the latter held in his hand the *quo warranto* of his master, wherewith to vacate the charter of Massachusetts, just a century before the severance of the Colonies from the British empire was accomplished. Whatever other causes may have concurred, in the progress of time, to produce this event, it is certain, that the disputes between the crown and the merchants and ship-owners of New England were commenced thus early ; and that they were continued, with but few intermissions, until the vessels of America went out upon the ocean under a new flag.

The accession of James the Second was proclaimed in Boston “with sorrowful and affected pomp.” Bent upon carrying out the purposes of his brother, he found a willing instrument in Sir Edmund Andros, whom he commissioned as governor of New England, with directions *to permit no printing press*, and “*to execute the laws of trade, and prevent frauds in customs.*” The attempts of Andros to enforce obedience to his instructions, his imposition of a new duty on imported merchandise, and his other oppressive acts, soon became too grievous to be borne. And the popular outbreak which they excited, which overturned his government and cast him and his advisers into prison, was, in great part, merely an effort of “the Bostoneers” to release their ships and goods from the thraldom of the Navigation Act and its kindred statutes.\*

Whatever were the benefits to America of the English revolution of 1688, none accrued to the interests under consideration. Massachusetts, it is true, obtained a new charter ; but Phips, her new governor, though born and bred

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\* Sir Edmund Andros was governor of New York *before* the period of which we are now speaking, and of Virginia *subsequently* ; and as he gave good satisfaction in both colonies, it may be fairly inferred, that the people of Massachusetts were “*stiff-necked*” and hard to govern. This impression derives strength from the fact, that other colonial governors, who administered affairs as Andros did, both at the north and south, met with similar success in the one region, and similar difficulties in the other. Such was the case with Jonathan Belcher, who was appointed to the executive chair of New Hampshire and Massachusetts in 1730, and became so unpopular that he was compelled to vacate it. He afterwards assumed the government of New Jersey, passed the remainder of his days in that colony, and was held in high esteem. Sir Francis Bernard also was governor of New Jersey, where he made himself “*very acceptable*,” and of Massachusetts, where he became so odious, that the General Court petitioned the king to remove him.

among the mariners of her eastern coast, had a short and unquiet administration. To his quarrel with the Collector of Boston he owed the loss of his station, and to his indiscretions generally we may attribute the introduction of a new means of oppression, in the establishment of a court of admiralty. Nor was this all. In 1696, King William organized a new Board for the supervision of colonial affairs ; and, prominent in their instructions to the colonial governors was the charge, to transmit punctually “the accounts of the collectors of the customs and naval officers.” So, too, by an act of parliament of the same year, all ships trading to or from colonial ports were required to be British or colonial built, and all goods which they carried to be British or colonial property. And, as if there were not enough of parental “care” manifested in this law, it was further enacted, that vessels from the Colonies, which should be unladen in Scotland or Ireland without first having been discharged in England, and paying the duties on their cargoes, should be forfeited.

Of attempts to bind down the energies of a people, whose homes were upon a sterile soil, and who — to use one of their own expressive phrases — “must subsist *somehow*,” it would seem, that there had been quite enough, for a while at least, to satisfy their most anxious mother. But as a new century opens, we find that the endeavors of the northern colonies to cover their bleak hills with flocks furnished another cause for parental solicitude, which was evinced by the statutory declaration, that they should export their wool and their manufactures of it only at the hazard of incurring the loss of the ship employed, the goods found, and five hundred pounds in money besides. An act followed, in 1732, forbidding the sending to foreign countries, by land or water carriage of any hats made in the Colonies, and fixing the number of apprentices that master hatters might employ ; while, in 1750, colonial iron-mills and forges had become so offensive to the nostrils of the English iron-mongers, that a law was passed declaring them to be “*nuisances*,” and as such to be “*abated*.” It may be, that this extreme “care” of the six furnaces and nineteen forges then possessed by New England was necessary ; but as England was unable to furnish for export, as far down as the year 1767, more than eleven thousand tons of iron annually,

Americans of the present day can imagine some little excuse for the very grave offence of making at home what could hardly be procured abroad.

Prior, however, to this memorable chiding of northern waywardness, the commercial prospects of Massachusetts were darkened, in 1733, by the passage of a bill which, had the revenue-officers been able to enforce it, would have driven her vessels from the fishing-grounds, and carried distress to every family on her seaboard. We allude to the "Sugar Act," adopted to hush the clamors of the planters in the British West Indies ; and which imposed heavy, even prohibitory, duties on sugar, molasses, and rum, coming into the Colonies from islands or possessions other than British. It was only because this law could not be executed, that Massachusetts did not lose at a blow the extensive trade she was pursuing with the French and Spanish islands ; where she bartered away her inferior kinds of fish, that were wanted nowhere else, but the sale of which, in one way or another, was indispensable ; because a market for good and bad qualities was necessary both for the continued prosecution of the fisheries, and for preserving the trade with Europe.

If during the irritations at which we have barely glanced, there had been any regulations of the crown or enactments of parliament to offend the planters of the south, there had been none to check their industry. Towards the colonies that sold raw produce, the policy of the mother country had been mild, perhaps liberal. They were the Round-heads, and not the Cavaliers, who met her upon the ocean and in the work-shop ; hence, it was to them that she showed the more odious features of the Colonial System.

The year 1761, to which we now come, was filled with events of momentous consequence. We find the merchants of Boston and Salem deeply exasperated by recent attempts, under fresh and peremptory orders, to exact strict observance of the laws of navigation and trade ; and, by a pretension just set up, to enter and search places suspected of containing smuggled goods. To submit to this pretension was to surrender the quiet of their homes and the order of their ware-houses to the underlings of the government, and the property which they held to the rapacity of informers, whose gains would be in proportion to their wickedness. They

withstood it, therefore, before the high court of Massachusetts, and before the imposing presence of five judges in wigs, bands, and robes of scarlet cloth, and the several other officials of the times. James Otis threw up an honorable and profitable station under the crown, because he would not oppose — and in order that he might espouse — their cause, and thus became the first champion of the Revolution. For it was while Otis argued against granting “writs of assistance” to the officers of the customs, said John Adams, that “*the child Independence was born.*” \*

We open next upon a scene of tumults and wild commotions, the prelude of open war. The nine years which preceded the “Boston massacre” were crowded with acts, which show what strength the popular wrath had attained. The revision of the “Sugar Act,” and the efforts to carry out its new provisions, aided, as the revenue-officers now were, by ships of war and an increase of their own corps, carried consternation to every fire-side in Massachusetts. Then came the seizure, and rescue, and re-seizure of some molasses on the Taunton river ; the resolution to stop the importation of British merchandise ; the bringing to of ships and tumbling the cargoes overboard all along the coast ; the seizure and condemnation of one ship with her cargo of French wines, and of another from Holland ; the suits in admiralty against the merchants who traded to the French and Spanish islands, for the old offences of compounding duties with the officers,— for entering the molasses of these islands as of the growth of Anquilla, and for smuggling it outright ; the appeal of the ship-owners to the ministry to be released from the harpies that robbed them of their goods, and made prize of their vessels ; the landing of a cargo of wines under

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\* Among those whom a kind Providence raised up to achieve American freedom, and of whom the American people know too little, is James Otis. Tudor's Life of him should be in the hands of every school-boy in our land. Otis wore himself out, body and mind, in the great and glorious cause of emancipating our country ; and yet how few, comparatively, know any thing of him, — of his deeds, his speeches, his pecuniary sacrifices, his ruined health, his shattered reason, and the sublime death which was vouchsafed to him. In England, there were times in his career when he was held in the utmost detestation. Thus, it was said of him, that he was “the president, mouth, and trumpeter, and alarm-bell of all North American malevolence and fury,” that “by his *ipse dixit* he passed, and with his own hands recorded, and by his own authority published, the resolves against mustard, muffs, tippets, and French cambric.”

the guard of men armed with bludgeons ; the seizure of Hancock's goods and the vessel that brought them ; the driving of the collector and comptroller of the customs on board of a man-of-war, and within the walls of "Castle William" ; the dragging of a revenue-boat through the streets, and the burning of it on the "Common" ; the mobs that demanded the resignation of one inspector, stripped, tarred, and feathered another, and that broke windows, demolished furniture, and destroyed buildings. Of the affray in "King street" itself, it may be remarked, that the killing of the boy, who hooted at, and dogged the footsteps of the land-waiter and informer, was its precursor ; that it was not the less bloody, because the sentry stationed at the custom-house was pelted by the mob, and lost none of its consequence with the multitude afterwards, on account of the story that the occupants of this house fired on the people.

Nor, in alluding to these manifestations of feeling, ought we to omit to mention, that, in the higher ranks, the common courtesies of life were suspended, — that permission to give a dinner in the usual place for public festivals had been refused to the governor, unless he would consent to dispense with the presence at table of the higher officers of the customs ; and that the officer in command of the British troops had violated common decency and decorum by quartering common soldiers and camp women in the legislative halls of the Colony. Better far to have followed the example of Virginia, where Washington dined and rode out with the royal governor, and attended a ball given to his lady, full four years after the latest of the occurrences of which we have yet spoken ! \*

Another step in the controversy, and we stand beside the "tea ships." We have no space for the discussion of a question so pregnant of consequences, but we must enter a qualified dissent from the common view of it. We con-

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\* We learn from Washington's journal, that he continued on terms of friendly intercourse with Lord Dunmore until after the Boston Port Bill went into operation, June 1774 ; but so different was the feeling in Massachusetts, that the ladies of the citizens opposed to the course of the ministry had refused, years before, to mingle in dances and social visits with the officers of the crown ; and so great was the fear of insult to the persons of those who attended a ball given by Mrs. Gambier (wife of the commander of the naval forces on the station), at Concert Hall, in 1771, that soldiers were employed as a guard.

sider that it was partially a question of commerce ; some look upon it as one of “ taxation ” entirely. There is very fair reason to believe, that “ three pence the pound duty ” was resisted as much from the apprehended loss of the colonial tea trade with the Dutch — carried on in contravention of the laws of navigation and trade — as from any other cause. The value of the tea consumed in all the Colonies was set at three hundred thousand pounds sterling, annually. The English East India company, backed by the ministry, grasped at a monopoly of the supply ; and the change of policy which *reduced* the duty from a shilling to three pence would have enabled them to obtain it ; inasmuch as their tea could then be afforded at as low a price as the smuggled, and was considered better.\* It is said, that the alarm was first sounded by the English merchants who sent tea to the colonial traders not concerned in the illicit trade ; but however this may be, it is very certain, that they incited resistance in the colonies to a plan which threatened to deprive them of a valuable business. As a punishment for the destruction of the tea in Boston, that port was shut up, and its commerce thus struck down at a blow. Lord North’s infamous measure of cutting off the fisheries,† which were then the very life-blood of New England, soon followed the passage of the Boston Port Bill, and was the crowning act of the policy which we have rapidly noticed. When the tidings that no vessels could now enter or leave the harbor of the capital of the North spread through the land, the cry that “ Boston is suffering in a cause which henceforth interests all America ” rose spontaneously. Public meetings were held in all parts of the country. People met in the open air, in churches, and court-houses, to express their horror of the oppressors, and their sympathy

\* The quantities of tea, which at times were illicitly imported into the Colonies from Holland, were very great. Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts were the principal marts. For a while, the risk of seizure was small, and it is said, that for three years, not one chest in five hundred of that landed in Boston fell into the hands of the officers of the customs. Tea then came in packages nearly four times as large as the largest-sized “ chests ” of the present day ; a chest was estimated at three hundred and forty pounds’ weight.

† The protest against this measure of Lord North’s, by the minority of the House of Lords, is one of the most eloquent and withering rebukes of the course of the ministry, that is to be found in the archives of the Revolution. It was in opposing this Newfoundland fishing-bill, that Fox made his first great speech, and made known his vast powers.

with the oppressed. We have examined the proceedings of no less than sixty-seven of these meetings, of which twenty-seven were held in Virginia, and all but one in places south of New England. The words we have just used mark the feelings manifested in all these assemblies, while many expressed them in almost the very terms. The day that the Port Bill went into operation was one of gloom and sadness every where. The Virginia House of Burgesses devoted it to fasting, humiliation, and prayer ; and the predictions, on both sides of the Atlantic, that it would produce a general confederation, and end in a general revolt were of rapid fulfilment.

The course of some of the British statesmen, at the period at which we have now arrived, has been much lauded. We have heard much, for instance, of Lord Chatham's friendliness to the colonies, and of the warm zeal he manifested in their behalf ; but we know not whence such opinions are derived. True, he opposed Lord North, with all the might of his great intellect, and all the fire of his surpassing eloquence ; and his speeches on American affairs will continue to be read, and to thrill the human frame, in all coming time. But what then ? No man did, no man could, say more in defence of the principles of the Colonial system than Lord Chatham. It was he who stood up in his place and declared, that the very Colonies, which were suffering so much from the measures of Lord North, "*had no right to manufacture even a nail for a horse-shoe*" ! Could he wonder, therefore, that when America no longer dreaded the French in Canada, when, indeed, the sympathies of France set in her favor, — when she had acquired strength, and the political condition of England and of all Europe was favorable for a trial of it, — that Nathaniel Green, the Warwick blacksmith, should peril his life to acquire for his countrymen the right to use an anvil ? Or how could he wonder, that George Taylor should become a "*signer*" of the great instrument, which would change his own and all other American furnaces and forges from "*abatable nuisances*" into structures worthy of care and protection ? And again ; why should he, why should any person, charge upon the administration, which he warred against so fiercely, *all* the causes of threatened disruption of the empire, when the rapacious spirit of England's monopolists had been crying "*Give,*

give"! for a hundred years; when the same spirit had been expressed in twenty-nine solemn acts of her parliament; and when her commercial policy had become so barbarous, that an American merchant must evade a law in order to give a sick neighbor an orange or a cordial of European origin, or else obtain them legally, loaded with the time, risk, and expense of a voyage from the place of growth or manufacture to England, and thence to his own ware-house? Nay, more; how long could he, or Burke, or Fox, have supposed, that American ship-owners and ship-masters would submit to a statute, which, when their vessels were wrecked on the coast of Ireland, did not permit the landing of their cargoes on the shore where they lay, but required that they should be sent to England, and then, if originally destined for, or wanted in, the Irish market, an English vessel might carry them thither, and pass the stranded vessel to land them, perhaps, for consumption? And yet, said Lord Chatham, "our legislative power over the colonies is sovereign and supreme"; "they owe obedience to our ordinances of trade, and navigation;" and "were I an American, I would recognise to England her supreme right of regulating commerce and navigation." If, therefore, we see, or fancy that we see, in his awful rebukes of the minister with whom Fox, his co-worker, did not refuse to join, something of the common, far too common, course pursued by the *outs* against the *ins*, such of our readers as dissent from our opinion, must pardon us for stating it.\*

Still, there is a force in the reasoning—and the United States felt its full strength after the peace of '83, and while under the Confederacy—which requires that all maritime affairs should be placed under the control of one supreme head. This principle was so obvious as to have been generally admitted in the Colonies; and yet—how indeed could it have been otherwise?—every application of it was a

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\* It is not improbable, we think, that had Lord Chatham been in power when Lord North was, he would have pursued a course not entirely unlike that of that minister. Those familiar with his career will remember the following sentiments expressed by him to Dr. Franklin during the "old French war," as it is called, or the struggle which resulted in wresting from France her remaining American domains. "When the war is closed," said Chatham, "if I should be in the ministry, I will take measures to prevent the Colonies from having a power to refuse or delay the supplies which may be wanted for national purposes."

grievance. The subtle distinction set up between “internal and external taxation,” we confess our inability to comprehend ; inasmuch as we can perceive no difference in theory or fact, between demanding postage on a letter, and exacting a duty on the “*paper*” on which it is written ; between the “*stamp*” duty on a ship’s manifest and clearance, and an impost duty on the “*painter’s colors*” spread on her sides, the “*glass*” of her cabin-windows, and the “*sugar*,” “*molasses*,” “*wine*,” and “*tea*,” laden under deck. A difference, however, was made, though no one appears to have defined it, or to have considered what it was. Washington could not determine, precisely, where the authority of England ceased, and where her invasion of the rights of America began ; and a question which his sound judgment failed to solve—as statesmen then reasoned—could be adjusted only by war. Colonies become nations, as surely as boys become men. This law of nature has now liberated nearly the whole of our continent, and the lesson is taught, we hope, that fire and sword will stay its operation nowhere else.

As we conclude our remarks on this topic, we ask to be fully understood. We have overlooked many of the events which produced alienation and final separation between the mother country and her Thirteen Colonies, because our subject does not require us to notice them. And New England generally, and her capital especially, have been prominent in our narrative, simply because northern interests suffered first and longest ; and because, in speaking of the commercial disputes, the part of the country where they principally occurred demanded our chief attention. While, then, we have not pretended to ascertain or state the relative agency of the North and the South in effecting the severance of the British empire, we must still insist, that these disputes accelerated it, and were among its most potent causes. New England did her whole duty, and that is enough. Merchants and ship-masters did their share also.

A full account of colonial navigation and trade might now claim our attention, but we can give them no more than a word. Though New York, at the present day, is the seat of our foreign commerce, and, in point of tonnage, second probably only to London in the whole world ; Boston, at the time of which we now write, owned and em-

ployed more shipping than any other port on the continent, and imported a greater amount of merchandise than any place in British America, unless it were Jamaica the then depot of goods intended for the supply of the Spanish colonial markets. The commerce of Massachusetts shot out from her fisheries, and they continued to be its main support until after the adoption of the present form of our national government. Her coasts had become famed for "the wealth of seas" years before the Pilgrims came to "their wilderness home"; and they — the exiled ones — turned their attention to the fisheries from the earliest hour of their arrival. The energy and zeal of the "fiery" Hugh Peters, minister of Salem, who returned to England, took part with Cromwell, and was executed by Charles the Second, gave to this branch of industry, and to ship-building and trade generally, a great and enduring impulse. Their increase was so rapid, that by the year 1670, Sir Josiah Child, the great English authority in matters of trade of the seventeenth century, denounced them as "prejudicial" and "dangerous" to the realm. At the time his Discourse on Trade was published, Boston, Charlestown, Salem, and Ipswich were noted for the building of vessels; and according to Randolph, the "Bostoneers" could furnish "good ships" at "four pounds the tun."

Boston was but a century old, when the maritime business of Massachusetts required six hundred vessels, of thirty-eight thousand tons burden, of which one half made voyages to Europe; and, before 1750, we find that four hundred and thirty vessels entered, and five hundred cleared, at Boston in a single year, beside coasters and fishermen. There entered at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, at the same period, seventy-three vessels; besides a hundred or more employed in coasting and fishing. The excellent harbor of Newport, Rhode Island, gave to that town great maritime importance at a very early time, and by the year 1739, it owned, at least, one hundred vessels. In six years afterwards, New England was supposed to possess one thousand ships, brigs, and schooners, without reckoning a very considerable number of "fishing barks"; and of about twenty-seven thousand tons of shipping built in all the colonies in 1772, more than eighteen thousand tons were launched from the ship-yards of the North. The vessels thus built and em-

ployed in the ports of New England, be it remarked, were owned, principally, by her own people ; while full three fourths of those engaged in carrying off the productions of the South were the property of English merchants, who resided at home, or came to the Colonies only as often as business required their presence. The trade of the planters, therefore, was an object of encouragement, and it was promoted accordingly.\*

We find a collector of the customs at Charleston, South Carolina, as soon as 1685 ; and the arrival of two hundred ships there, and the export of forty thousand "barrels" of rice yearly, as early as 1731. In twelve years more, the cultivation of indigo was introduced into South Carolina, and by 1750, two hundred thousand pounds' weight of that article was exported, and three hundred ships came to that port in a year. Virginia furnished for sale a surplus of seventy thousand hogsheads of tobacco in 1758, and forty-five thousand tons of vessels entered her ports and rivers during 1771. The import and export trade of Maryland required one hundred and thirty ships as soon as 1736, and the tonnage employed in her trade in 1771 was about thirty thousand. In 1760, the infant colony of Georgia loaded thirty-seven ships with produce ; while, in twelve years more, the plantations which the noble Oglethorpe founded, and which he lived to see independent of his native land, had so rapidly improved as to employ two hundred and seventeen vessels of various sizes, and to export products of the value of more than half a million of dollars. To sum up colonial commerce as it was when on the eve of interruption from the troubles of the Revolution, we may add, that the trade between Great Britain and America was calculated to need, and to steadily maintain, one thousand and seventy-eight ships, and about twenty-nine thousand seamen ; that the Colonies took of the mother country goods worth more than sixteen millions of dollars ; and that the Colonies sent off to the different countries with which they had lawful and unlawful trade, merchandise, fish, oil, and products of the soil, of nearly or quite the same value.

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\* Among these encouragements, we find an act of Parliament, of the year 1706, which granted a large bounty on tar, pitch, rosin, turpentine, and shoes, exported to the mother country ; and another law of the same, passed in 1748, which offered a bounty of sixpence the pound on all colonial indigo sent directly from the place of its growth to Great Britain.

That the trade of the South, which, as we have said, was principally in the hands of English merchants, should have been deemed valuable, and that her great staples should have increased in kinds and quantities, under the fostering care of the parent hand, is by no means surprising. But when we find, that none of the colonies north of Maryland ever had a balance in their favor from their dealings with England, and were often compelled to provide for a heavy amount in money to liquidate the balance against them ; and when, too, we consider the oppressive measures which weighed down their maritime pursuits, we can only account for the extent and importance to which these pursuits attained, by remembering that these measures never were, and never could be, rigidly enforced, until fleets and armies were employed for the purpose.\*

We resume the consideration of the commercial policy of England as manifested at the period of the war of Independence. At the peace of '83, we had conventions of amity

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\* The following extract from a letter, dated London, June 12, 1775, gives, we suppose, a pretty accurate view of the state of public feeling with regard to New England, at that period. It will be seen, that the Southern Colonies were still regarded with favor. "The *Bostonians* have been guilty of numberless acts of rebellion, which have no other real foundation than their opinion, that they can resist with success. On the slightest occasion, large bodies of men appear in arms, with the avowed intention of fighting the King's troops. Let them have their humor. In every essential point of view they are the enemies of Great Britain, and their insults must not be forgiven because they are dangerous, — so dangerous, that suppose them defeated, suppose them suing for forgiveness, with all the humility which may be expected from their present insolence, they must not be forgiven ; they can never be again entitled to the protection and encouragement of the mother country. Their soil and climate, their growing manufactoryes of iron and wool, their ship-building, and even their industry, are our natural, our irreconcilable enemies.

"The Colonists must not only be defeated, but, as far as it is in our power, they must be destroyed. This may be done without much carnage, which is so dreaded by us.

"*The steady and inflexible regulations of policy, by which every source of trade or manufactures must be cut off from the Northern Colonies, and every possible encouragement given to settlement in warmer latitudes, can alone effect it. Indigo, rice, rum, sugar, cotton, silk, and the various productions of the tropics, are commodities we want, and the habits of life in southern climates will for ever prevent their interfering with our laborious manufactoryes. Mutual wants are the true foundations of trade and political friendship, and colonies established without this permanent view, have ever been the ruin of the mother country. We want nothing from the Colony most dangerous to us but provisions and lumber for the islands ; and these it will furnish, even were it in a much less cultivated and improved state than it now is.*" The italics are our own.—*Am. Archives.* II, 961.

and trade with France, Holland, and Sweden ; but our dealings with these powers were so inconsiderable as to render the treaties nearly valueless. All saw, that our intercourse with England must be renewed, and would continue to increase ; hence, great anxiety prevailed to place it on an equitable footing. She, however, refused, once and again, to swerve from the principles of her navigation act ; and to these refusals we owe principally, if not entirely, that inestimable blessing, the present Constitution of the United States. She could agree to part with her Colonies, and to continue to them the free use of their ancient fishing-grounds ; but her spirit of commercial monopoly remained inexorable. The American commissioners, who obtained the treaty of '83, failed in their endeavors to effect a commercial arrangement with her ; and a new negotiation, ordered by Congress within ten days of the ratification of that treaty, had no better result. Yet Mr. Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, one of her most gifted and sagacious statesmen, favored a liberal course, and introduced into parliament a bill which, had it passed, would have placed the trade of the two countries, and the intercourse of the United States with the British West Indies, on a satisfactory and permanent foundation. Determined upon a further trial, Congress, in sending John Adams, the first American minister, to the British court, instructed him to make fresh attempts to conclude the convention that was so needful and so much desired. His efforts — and none could have made stronger — were as fruitless as those which had preceded them.

His own comprehensive words, as found in his correspondence with Mr. Jay, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, will show, far better than any which we can use, his zeal for the interests of his country, and the obstacles that beset him during his mission. Our extracts must be brief, but our readers will judge of their pith. He soon saw how hopeless of success was his errand, and that, to induce terms, the United States would be compelled "*to countervail.*" He was elected by ballot, on the 24th of February, 1785 ; and on the 10th of June in that year, he wrote, "it is scarcely possible, to calculate to what a height of naval power a navigation act will raise the United States in a few years" ; and, on the 26th of the same month, he thus sums up the reasoning of those around him : "*Cui bono?* they cry. *To*

*what end a treaty of commerce, when we are sure of as much American trade as we have occasion for without it.*" On the 19th of July, he says, that the attachment in England to the old policy in maritime affairs was so strong, that he "despaired of any equal treaty, and therefore of any treaty, until they shall be made to feel the necessity of it." Ten days afterwards, he submitted to the English ministry the draft of a convention, based on principles of fair trade of each country on and with "*all the coasts and countries*" of the other; but so little hope had he of its adoption, that in addressing Mr. Jay, he thus expresses himself: "It is very apparent, that we shall never have a satisfactory arrangement with this country, until Congress shall be made by the States supreme in matters of foreign commerce and treaties of commerce, and until Congress shall have exerted that supremacy with a decent firmness." On the 6th of August, he writes, (after alluding to the different feeling which prevailed when he and Mr. Jay were in England together,) "*the boast is, that our commerce has returned to its old channels, and that it can follow no other*" ; and he adds, that "the utmost contempt of our trade is freely expressed in pamphlets, gazettes, coffee-houses, and in common street talk. I wish I could not add to this, the discourses of cabinet counsellors and ministers of state, as well as members of both houses of parliament." In his letter of October 21st, he urges anew the necessity of retaliation, and declares, that "the commerce of America will have no relief, at present, nor in my opinion, *ever*, until the United States shall have generally passed Navigation Acts. If," he continues, "this measure is not adopted, we shall be derided, and the more we suffer, the more will our calamities be laughed at. My earnest exhortations to the States then are, and ought to be, to lose no time in passing such acts." On the 31st of January, Mr. Jay communicated to Congress his approval of Mr. Adams's course, and expressed a conviction, founded on his letters, "that general and full powers to regulate the trade of the United States, both foreign and domestic, should be vested in Congress." But the hour was not yet. Such an event, Mr. Adams congratulated himself, was about to happen, and he had labored to promote it, as we have seen; and in writing on the 16th of May following, he amusingly observes, that as soon as such a power was conferred,

“you will begin to hear a bray in England for a treaty ; like Daniel Defoe’s game-cock among the horses’ feet, it will be, ‘*pray, gentlemen, don’t let us tread upon one another.*’ ” June 6th, he says, “if Congress should be empowered to lay taxes upon navigation and commerce, or any thing else, to pay the interest of the money borrowed in Europe, you may borrow what you will. If that is not done, their servants abroad had better be all recalled, and our exports and imports all surrendered to foreign bottoms.” Near the close of the year, he informs Mr. Jay, that “there are no symptoms of a more favorable inclination to a treaty” ; and, on the 10th of April, 1787, that “the members of parliament have been so long irritated and tormented, that they detest to hear the name of America mentioned, and the political system and national humor seem to be neither to speak nor think of it.”

Meanwhile, in the country which Mr. Adams represented, all was confusion. Whoever surveys the scene which America then presented will feel, we think, that the objects sought for by the Revolution had not been attained. We were no longer dependencies of the British crown, it is true ; but the labor of no man’s hands was secure from vicious legislation at home, or illiberal measures abroad. The whole country was not only poor, but distressed. Civil war menaced one State, and prosperity was to be found within the borders of none. The government of the Confederacy was not only unable to meet the navigation act of England, and establish a just and uniform system of commercial dealing with other nations, but seemed fast hurrying to dissolution. The efforts of individual States to protect their own trade and shipping had been without plan or concert, and consequently wholly futile. Massachusetts, as bold as any, had prohibited the exportation of merchandise of American origin in British bottoms, on pain of forfeiture of vessel and cargo ; but, not being sustained, she had been compelled to repeal the law. States that possessed foreign commerce imposed taxes on those that did not ; and in these angry collisions, the vessels of some States were treated as alien in others ; while Maryland, if not actually excluding all, legislated mainly to benefit her own. Nor were duties on imported merchandise more uniform. In some States, the impost was as low as three per cent ; in others

as high as ten. Virginia had made an impost law, but it had been repealed ; and one who shared in her confidence and councils had declared, that he would " crawl to Richmond on his bare knees to prevent its reënactment." The non-importing States were clamorous against those of whom they purchased foreign commodities, for alleged unjust exactions and enormous gains ; while debtors would pay nothing, and creditors obtained neither sympathy nor justice by applying to the tribunals.

Such was the condition of those who had stood side by side on many a hard-fought field ; when, in January, 1786, Virginia proposed a Convention of delegates from all the States, to consider the crisis and provide for it. Most of the States responded to the call, and elected their delegates ; but when the Convention met at Annapolis, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey were the only ones actually represented. The powers of those who appeared for the first four States extended only to subjects of " trade and commerce" ; but the instructions of New Jersey were, to regard "*other important matters*" also. The delegates of these five States did not deem " it advisable to proceed on the business of their mission, under the circumstances of so partial and defective a representation" ; and in the report from which these words are taken, they recommended that another convention, composed of representatives from all the States, should be convened on a future day. They favored the instructions of New Jersey to her delegates then present, and urged upon the States to clothe the members of the proposed assembly with the additional powers. They were " the more naturally led to this conclusion," they said, " as, in the course of their reflections on the subject, they have been induced to think that the power of regulating trade is of such comprehensive extent, and will enter so far into the general system of the Federal Government, that to give it efficacy, and to obviate questions and doubts concerning its precise nature and limits, may require a correspondent adjustment of other parts of the Federal system."

Rhode Island feared that she should lose some of the commercial advantages of her position by any change, and refused assent to the proposition from Annapolis ;\* but dele-

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\* It would seem, that the affairs of Rhode Island, at this period, were in the hands of bad men. Under their influence, she not only refused to par-

gates from the remaining States assembled at Philadelphia, in May, 1787, and framed the present Constitution of the United States. To take from the States their power over commercial concerns, and to yield the maritime interests of the country to the guidance of the national government which was now to be formed, appears to have been the general wish of the members of this Convention ; but this point conceded, unanimity of opinion ceased. In the plan submitted by Charles Pinckney, it was proposed, to confer upon Congress the power “ to regulate commerce with all nations, and among the several States ” ; but *conditioned*, that “ all laws regulating commerce shall require the assent of *two thirds* of the members present in each house.” So, too, in the report of the “ Committee of Detail,” we find, that the same number of votes in both houses, was deemed requisite to pass a “ navigation act.” A principle so manifestly unjust was opposed ; and upon a motion to commit the subject, Mr. Gorham of Massachusetts said, “ he desired it to be remembered, that *the Eastern States had no motive to union but a commercial one* ” ; and significantly added, that “ *they were able to protect themselves.* ” On a subsequent occasion, when Mr. Pinckney’s project of requiring two thirds was before the Convention, that gentleman divided the commercial interests of the United States into five distinct classes ; to wit, the fisheries and West India trade of New England, the free trade of New York, the wheat and flour trade of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the tobacco trade of Maryland, Virginia, and a part of North Carolina, and the rice and indigo trade of South Carolina and Georgia ; and he insisted, that a *bare majority* of votes in Congress would prove insufficient to prevent oppressive regulations of these different interests. “ The power of regulating commerce,” said he, “ is a pure con-

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ticipate in the doings of this Convention, but remained out of the Union until after the organization of the government under the Constitution which it framed ; and until after the Senate had passed a bill, to prevent the introduction into the United States of goods, wares, and merchandise, from her territory. This bill was arrested in the House by a message from the President, which announced the ratification and adoption of the Constitution ; and acts of Congress were soon passed, to extend to “ Rhode Island and Providence Plantations ” the revenue and tonnage laws, for forming collection districts and creating ports of entry, for giving effect to the laws establishing judicial courts, for taking an enumeration of the inhabitants, &c. &c.

cession on the part of the southern States," and it is for their "true interest, to have *no* regulation of commerce." "The northern and middle States," said Mr. Clymer, who was bred in a counting-house, "will be ruined, if they are not enabled to defend themselves against foreign regulations." "Preferences to American ships," said Gouverneur Morris, "will multiply them, till they can carry the southern produce cheaper than it is now carried" in foreign bottoms. "A navy," continued he, "is essential to the security particularly of the southern States, and can only be had by a navigation act, encouraging American bottoms and seamen. In those points of view, then, alone, it is the interest of the southern States, that navigation acts should be facilitated." "Shipping," he added, "is the worst and most precarious kind of property, and stands most in need of public patronage." "The interest of the southern and eastern States," said Peirce Butler, of the family of the dukes of Ormond, and a delegate from South Carolina, "is as different as the interests of Russia and Turkey." "If," rejoined the inflexible Gorham, "if the government is to be so fettered *as to be unable to relieve the eastern States, what motive can they have to join in it, and thereby tie their own hands from measures which they could otherwise take for themselves?*" And again, he made the declaration, that these States "were not led to strengthen the Union by fear for their own safety."

The adjustment of this important question, while views so dissimilar as these prevailed, was, of course, impossible, and it was finally disposed of by compromise; the north agreeing that the importation of slaves might be continued twenty years, and the south, that only a majority, instead of two thirds, of Congress should be required to regulate the commercial concerns of the Union. Thus then, those who earn their bread on the sea, after struggling for more than a century against the domination of England, were compelled at last to pay a price to their own countrymen, in order to place their pursuits on *an equality* with those of sunnier skies; and thus did they buy the right to be preferred to foreigners as carriers of the surplus productions of the American soil! But even with this arrangement, Virginia, Maryland, and Georgia appear to have been dissatisfied; for some fifteen days afterwards, when the matter had been fairly concluded, they voted for a proposition to

deprive a majority of Congress of the power to pass “a navigation act,” until the twenty years should have expired. There might have been some “good” educed from this “seeming evil,” for had Virginia been gratified, our commerce and tonnage would, probably, have continued so small, as to have required neither the “gun-boat” nor “embargo” systems to have *preserved* them; that these measures adorn our history, therefore, may be owing to the perverse spirit of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and South Carolina, as far back as September, 1787.

The power over commerce, thus conferred upon the National Government, has been declared by the Court of the United States to be perfect and supreme. That tribunal has decided, that the word “commerce” comprehends navigation as fully as if that very term had been used; that it extends to passenger vessels, as well as to merchant vessels, in ballast or with cargoes; that it applies to vessels propelled by steam, as well as to those which use sails; that it extends to every species of trading intercourse between the United States and foreign powers, and between the several States; that it does not stop at State lines, but can be exercised wherever commercial dealings exist; and that State laws, which tax merchants for selling, or which require licenses for selling their goods by the bale or package, are void; but on the other hand, that it does not reach mercantile transactions begun and ended between individuals residing in the same State, nor interfere with the inspection, health, quarantine, turnpike, and ferry laws of the States.

How has this power been used, and has its exercise had any influence in changing the commercial policy of England? At the time of the meeting of the first Congress, our trade was in a most disastrous condition, both at home and abroad. A ship-owner of Massachusetts, who, since the peace, had sent his vessels to six different countries, quaintly remarked, that if he might “believe good, honest, credible men, America was regarded in the same light by foreign nations as a well-behaved negro is in a gentleman’s family.” Though the business of the country required, and actually employed, five hundred, or, as some estimated, six hundred thousand tons of navigation, we had of our own only two hundred thousand tons, and of the balance, full three quarters

were English. England supplied us not only with her own commodities, but with a large proportion of those which we needed from other nations. Nearly all of the southern staples were carried off by English vessels, and of the profits on our imports, which were about eighteen millions, and on our exports, about twenty millions of dollars, a considerable share fell to English merchants, and those employing their capital or enjoying a connexion with them. A free and general trade with the West Indies, whether British, Spanish, French, or Dutch, was indispensable to the preservation of the fisheries, and therefore of the commerce of New England ; but in all the islands of the Caribbean sea, one port in St. Lucia, three in Hispaniola, one in Guadalupe, and one in Martinico, were all that were open to us. In a word, our situation was so similar to that of England when her statesmen devised her navigation act, that our legislators were pointed to its leading features for a remedy. Bills were accordingly introduced, to discriminate between trade carried on in American and foreign vessels.

By these bills, merchandise imported in our own bottoms was to pay ten per cent less duty than when brought in others ; and American vessels were to be charged forty-four cents the ton less tonnage duty than those wearing foreign flags.\* The discriminating principle, as applied to imports, received the official sanction of Washington on the thirteenth anniversary of our independence ; and thus, though " independence was born " in resisting, our commercial freedom was to be made sure by imitating, the navigation act of England. Whatever the opposition, originally, to granting to a majority of Congress the entire control of the trade and navigation of the country, and however objectionable this provision of the Constitution had appeared in the conventions at the south, the proceedings during the sessions of the first Congress, when measures for their protection were before it, afford but slight indications of sectional feeling. Indeed, so little was manifested, that Mr. Madison took occasion to remark, that though there was a diversity of opinion as to the propriety of giving preference to the vessels of our own citizens, " gentlemen from the same State differed as much

\* By an act of Congress passed March 27, 1804, a further duty, of 50 cents the ton, was imposed on foreign vessels under the denomination of " Light money."

as gentlemen from the extremes of the continent." Mr. Jackson, of Georgia, said, that if he could only see American ships enough to carry off our productions, he would not only consent to a discriminating impost, but "to a total prohibition of foreigners"; and when Mr. Madison, the *ultra* of the *ultras*, introduced the proposition, that after a certain day, no foreign vessel belonging to a country not in commercial treaty with the United States should "*be permitted to export from the United States any unmanufactured article, being the growth or produce thereof,*" even Massachusetts thought this was going too far, and Mr. Sedgwick rebuked him, declaring that the plan was "an impotent measure of passion, not dictated by the understanding." Such "passion" might have been unnecessary then; but now, when such conflicting opinions prevail among those who profess to wear the mantle, and to carry out the principles, of the "Father of the Constitution," we, who *still* prefer to encourage the American ship-owner rather than the foreigner, may urge that his earliest efforts—when that precious instrument was fresh from its maker's hands—were enlisted in the same cause.

The year of the passage of the discriminating impost and tonnage bills, Washington turned his attention to a commercial arrangement with England; but Gouverneur Morris, to whom he intrusted the duty of conferring with her ministers on the subject, was treated with neglect, and was directed, finally, to close his communications. In 1794, however, Mr. Jay was more fortunate, for in the treaty which bears his name,—and which excited so long and angry a controversy,—provision was made for a free trade between the United States and the British dominions in Europe; for a direct trade between the United States and the British possessions in Asia; and for a limited trade between the United States and the British West Indies. The terms prescribed for our intercourse with the latter were not acceptable to the Senate, and the treaty as ratified rendered them inoperative. The remaining articles relating to commerce expired in 1803, between which period and the close of the war of 1812, no convention was concluded between the two countries, and their dealings with each other were regulated by a series of retaliatory and countervailing measures. But England became weary of such measures on her part, and,

as confessed by Mr. Huskisson, after "*a long struggle to counteract the navigation system of America, without in any degree relaxing*" her own, "*found it necessary to adopt the system of reciprocity.*" The controversy thus came to an end ; and the treaty concluded between her and the United States, on the 3d of July, 1815, which is still in force, was the first that either nation ever formed with any power, based on principles of perfect equality and reciprocal obligation.\* In the opinion of men of no mean sagacity, its operation has proved more beneficial to the shipping of England than to our own ; but had it included the same stipulations for a free and permanent trade with the British possessions in the western hemisphere, that it does for intercourse with the territories of that crown in Europe and Asia, we might be satisfied with it.

As we now close one question of commercial strife with England, we open upon another, — "the Colonial Trade." Our limits will not allow us even to enumerate the many attempts to place our relations with the British Colonies on a satisfactory ground ; and merely saying, therefore, that these attempts began soon after the peace of '83, and that they were closed in 1830, by "McLane's Arrangement," we proceed to state, very briefly, some of the effects of that "arrangement" upon our ship-owners. The colonial trade for the last thirteen years is said by many to have been "reciprocal" ; but we have watched its course during the whole period, and feel compelled to declare, that no epithet more inappropriate can be given to it ; since it can be shown, that it has driven many thousand tons of our vessels out of their accustomed employment, without affording any other business as an equivalent.

And first, it has been of serious injury to our cotton ships. The building of vessels in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, for sale in England, is an extensive business, and we have known vessels built for this purpose to go to a cotton port at the south on their voyage "home," and obtain freights which net a fifth or a quarter of their entire cost. So, too, whenever cotton pays well, the ships which are built for

\* Since the Treaty with the United States, Great Britain has entered into several others ; among them, we may mention the following : with Denmark, Austria, the Hanse Towns, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Prussia, Russia, the Two Sicilies, and Turkey.

use in the timber trade, and which are ordinarily employed in this way, are to be found at Savannah or New Orleans accepting an eighth or a sixteenth of a penny less on the pound than our own vessels. Nor is this the whole of the mischief ; since colonial ships often go in quest of cotton when the rates are low, and thus by increasing the number of freighters, induce competition which results in a loss to all. Before the "arrangement," no such interference existed, because colonial vessels did not carry our cotton at all, while those belonging to the mother country could not lade with it, if they entered a colonial port on their way to the United States.

Were there any thing to compensate us for this state of things, it might be borne ; but as there is not, we are compelled to regard the earnings of colonial vessels as so much taken directly from the earnings of our own ships. To be underbidden in our own ports, in the carriage of our great staple, and to submit to rates of freight unnaturally and vexatiously made by vessels, which cost full one third less than the American, which are either hurrying to the English merchants who have advanced their worth, and are expecting them as "remittances," or which are occasionally withdrawn from the business of transporting timber, and at best, are mere interlopers, that seek to share all the gains, and shirk all the losses of our southern trade, is a kind of "reciprocity" which we trust will speedily terminate.

In the second place, this "arrangement" has injured our coasting business. Between one hundred and twenty-five, and one hundred and fifty, thousand tons of gypsum and grindstones are used annually in the United States, the carrying of which every year requires one thousand vessels, of one hundred and fifty tons' capacity each. Before 1830, these vessels were all American ; now, two thirds, at least, are colonial. Our coasters have a hard lot of it at best, and the loss of a trade which gave them employment during the droughts of the summer months, when our saw-mills are idle, has been most seriously felt. The United States are the only customers that Nova Scotia has ever had, or is likely to have, for her plaster and stone ; and we could have kept entire control over the manner of taking them. The transfer of their carriage to colonial bottoms seems to be a matter of no regret with many, because they regard the

whole trade as too contemptible for national concern. To transport plaster and grindstones is, indeed, an humble as well as a laborious occupation ; but those who live by avocations of higher rank and richer rewards need not sneer at it, for all that. It is an honest way of earning bread, and as such, is entitled to consideration and protection.

Again, we object to the “arrangement,” because it has secured to New England no proper share of the trade in supplying the British West Indies with the articles which we have to spare, and which we steadily send to the sugar islands of other European powers. The trade with the planters was the “boon” sought for ; and, since 1830, how much of it have the northern States been able to obtain ? How much lumber, for instance, have they been able to furnish ? One fact will show, we think, precisely. An American house, well known to the writer, resolved some two years ago, to send to Trinidad a brig of their own, and a colonial brig which they had under charter ; and for this purpose, they procured *lumber which grew and was sawed in Maine for each.* The lumber for their own vessel was of course laden in American waters, but that designed for the other was taken in raft to a neighbouring port of New Brunswick, within sight of their counting-room windows. It so happened, that the two vessels were in readiness to go to sea on the same day, and as they were addressed to the same merchant, their cargoes were sold at the same price. Now, on a calculation which supposes that both vessels were of the same capacity, and carried the same quantity, the earnings of each ought, on the principles of “reciprocity,” to have been alike ; or, rejecting such a calculation, to have differed only in proportion as one cargo was larger than the other. Instead of this, however, an adjustment of the accounts proved, that the voyage under the British flag produced eight hundred and ninety-three dollars more than that made under our own.

No fairer case than this, as it seems to us, can ever occur. If so, it follows that the same elements of difference have existed in every adventure undertaken in an American bottom,—varying in the number of dollars only according to the tonnage of the vessel employed, or quantity of lumber carried. True, the new tariff of Sir Robert Peel shows, that this inequality is no longer to exist ; but its termination makes no recompense for the past ; nor have we any pledge, that the

former system will not be renewed. We have no time to pursue this topic, but conclude by saying, that common self-respect, common regard for the national interests, forbids us to trust to acts of parliament and colonial assemblies for the terms on which we may deal with the British possessions in America. If treaty stipulations are necessary to regulate our intercourse with England herself, they are equally necessary to direct it with her colonies.

We resume the consideration of our commercial policy as indicated by Treaties. As already remarked, our convention with Great Britain in 1815 was the first departure from the system of discrimination adopted soon after the organization of our present government. There may be no serious reason to regret that that treaty was concluded, or that its principles have been extended to some other maritime powers ; but since we are among those who believe that *our fathers were men of wisdom*, we do regret that so little remains of what they accomplished. Most foreign flags may now enter our ports on the same terms as our own. Since the year 1815, we have formed treaties of reciprocity with Central America, Denmark, Sweden, the Hanse Towns, Prussia, Brazil, Austria, Mexico, Russia, Venezuela, Greece, Sardinia, Netherlands, Hanover, Portugal, and Ecuador. Mr. Madison remarked, very justly, that “ the power of forming treaties of commerce with foreign nations ought to be exercised *with all possible circumspection.*” Whether the power has been thus exercised in the present case may well be doubted.

In remarking upon the effects which have followed so general an abandonment of discrimination between American and foreign vessels and their cargoes, we shall use the words of the Committee on Commerce, as found in the Report named at the head of this article. The observations of a considerable period, as well as the careful examination of our official documents from year to year, had led us to many of the conclusions of this able state paper before its appearance. No inconsiderable toil, therefore, in the same field, enables us to appreciate the time and labor necessary for its compilation.\* We admire it for its strong American feeling ; and we make copious extracts from it, in order that

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\* This Report is understood to be from the pen of Mr. Kennedy.

those of our readers, to whom it is not accessible, may be possessed of the leading facts and opinions which bear upon the point under discussion. There are some expressions which we might soften, and some statements that we might qualify ; but in the reasoning, generally, we fully concur. We commence where the Committee thus speak of the system of discrimination.

“ It was (they say) avowedly and distinctively *protective* of the interests it had in charge. It was a system of restrictions upon the commerce and shipping of foreign nations for the benefit of our own. The American ship-owner was guarded and protected against the competition of the whole world, by discriminations in his favor in the duties both on merchandise and tonnage, as well as in the port charges and other expenses of his voyage ; provision was made for the encouragement of American seamen ; and the system was administered with a strict and jealous regard to the privileges which it conferred. If the severity of these restrictions was occasionally relaxed, in favor of particular nations, it was never without a specific equivalent ; and the subject was left at all times at the disposal of the Government, to be controlled by the legislation of Congress, as the occasion might demand.” . . . . “ During the period of our restrictive system, excluding from it only the interval of the war and the embarrassments that preceded that event, the growth of the American marine constitutes one of the most striking facts in the history of the country.” — p. 13.

In commenting upon the “ extraordinary increase of foreign shipping in our ports,” consequent upon the change in our policy, they remark,

“ The steadiness with which that increase has advanced, through a series of years, indicating no temporary or occasional impulse, but some permanent source of vigor, has diffused an apprehension that it is still to continue, and that it may, at no very distant day, arrive at a point which shall present the anomaly of American commerce chiefly sustained by the ships and seamen of transatlantic nations. On a question of so much concern, Congress will doubtless be influenced by broad and patriotic views of the national interest, and will not hesitate to discard whatever error of theory or practice it may be convinced has crept into the administration of this branch of our polity.” — p. 20.

After citing some statistics, which go to show the relative increase of American and foreign navigation employed

in our foreign trade, since 1830, they proceed to remark, that in that year,

“ The British tonnage which entered our ports amounted to 87,231 tons ; in 1835, to 529,922 ; and in 1840, to 582,424 ; being, in the first of these periods, about three fourths, and increasing, in the second and third, to nearly five sixths of the whole amount of foreign tonnage entering into the United States ; while our shipping, which entered from Great Britain and her dependencies, (in 1830) amounted to 473,205 tons ; in 1835, to 654,719 ; and in 1840, to 826,900 ; — that, consequently, in the first of these years, the British shipping in our trade was less than one fifth of our own ; in the second, it had increased to upwards of four fifths ; and in the third, stood somewhat above four sixths of that belonging to our own citizens. And it will also be perceived, that the increase of British shipping in our ports in the ten years since 1830 has reached the ratio of nearly six hundred and seventy per cent.

“ The French tonnage, in the same aspect in which we have regarded the British,” continues the Committee, “ was, in 1830, 11,156 tons ; in 1835, it was 15,457 ; and in 1840, had increased to 30,701 tons.” While our “ tonnage entering from France and her colonies was, in 1830, 120,793 ; in 1835, 107,533 ; and in 1840, 130,541 tons ; the French, through these three periods, bearing, relatively to our shipping, the proportion of something less than one tenth in the first, of one seventh in the second, and a fraction below a fourth in the third ; and having increased in the ten years since 1830 about 180 per cent. The increase of our shipping in French ports, in the same time, was about nine per cent.” — p. 21.

After noticing the steady increase of our trade with Spain and her colonies, and showing that it employed, in 1840, over seventy *per cent.* more of our tonnage than in 1830, and that the imports had increased in about the same ratio, they consider next the state of our commerce with the northern powers of Europe. Of Russian, Prussian, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, and Hanseatic shipping, they state, that the aggregate tonnage which entered our ports, in 1830, was sixteen thousand two hundred and four ; that, in 1835, it was fifty-two thousand and eighty-three ; and that, in 1840, it had increased to sixty-eight thousand four hundred and seventy-two tons.

“ While the American shipping entering in the same years from the ports of these six Powers was, in 1830, 152,213 ; in

1835, 95,061 ; and in 1840, 97,683 tons. The foreign shipping having *increased* more than four hundred per cent. ; — the American having *decreased* something more than forty per cent. ; — the trade through this interval having but little changed in amount. Amongst the countries enumerated in this aggregate, the increase of the shipping of the Hanse Towns and of Sweden will attract particular remark ; — the first having increased from 9,653 tons in 1830, to 70,703 in 1837, and to 41,874 in 1840 ; the second, from 4,136 in 1830, to 16,964 in 1840, and having at one year in the interval (1837) reached 27,849 tons.” — p. 22.

From these facts and others, and from a course of reasoning which our limits will not allow us to give, the Committee derive evidence of the following facts ;

“ 1. Of a great and increasing proportion of foreign tonnage in our trade.

“ 2. That that increase has not, in any equal ratio, attended upon an increase of trade, but, especially in reference to the shipping of the north of Europe, has occurred where the trade has been nearly stationary.

“ 3. That in the excitement communicated to our commerce by the excessive increase of banking and paper money, the foreign shipping interest has profited even more than our own ; partaking of the temporary gain of that system, without sharing in the final embarrassment which it brought upon the country.

“ 4. That our navigation in general has fared best in our commerce with those nations with whom we have not negotiated reciprocity treaties.

“ 5. That the results have been most to our disadvantage where the reciprocal privilege has been established on the broadest scale.” — p. 27.

With one more extract we must conclude.

“ The Powers with which we have concluded (reciprocity) treaties — we speak especially of those of the north of Europe — are well known both to build and navigate their vessels cheaper than we can do. It is not affirming too much to say, that the materials employed in ship-building are to be procured in the Baltic States at rates of cost much below that for which they can be obtained in the United States ; that the wages of labor employed in this occupation are, in these countries, at least one half less than ours ; and that those paid to seamen and all others concerned in the navigation of their ships may be placed at an average of thirty-three and a third per cent. less than are usually

paid in the United States ; whilst all the expenses of victualling and providing for these vessels are quite as cheap if not cheaper than are incurred by our ship-owners. We do not furnish examples of these several items of cost and expense, only because the fact we have stated is notorious, and has been so often brought to the view of the country as to render it unnecessary.

“ Yet with these Powers we persuade ourselves, that our treaties have placed our commerce upon a reciprocal footing. To say nothing of the high, and even prohibitory duties which, in several of these States, are brought by their tariffs into contrast with our low duties, we have consented to open the trade of our whole country of seventeen millions of people to the subjects of these powers in exchange for the privilege of a trade which, on their side, is confined to the supply of the wants of a much smaller circle of population, and, in reference to some of them, to some few ports whose commerce, in comparison with ours, is certainly limited, if not to an inconsiderable, at least to a very inferior, amount of demand. It was going far in the way of concession, to grant the privilege of *direct* transportation to the produce of the respective countries with whom these treaties are formed. But it is scarcely conceivable what adequate motives of good policy could have presented themselves to our Government to justify the opening of our entire trade with all the world to the vessels of these Powers, — endowed as they are with such capacities for cheap navigation, — and to admit their ships and seamen into a free competition with our own, in whatever trade their merchants might think proper to embark. This we have nevertheless done ; and the consequence is, that Congress is receiving from all quarters deep complaints of the injury we have inflicted upon our own navigation, — an injury which is now in rapid progress of mischief, and which, if not arrested by timely legislation, must result in laying up our own shipping to rot at our docks, and in the surrender of our carrying trade to the friendly rivals whom our policy has done so much to favor.” — pp. 39, 40.

We have already said, in substance, that had we used our own notes in speaking of the effects of the reciprocity policy, we should not have employed Mr. Kennedy’s precise arguments, illustrations, and words ; though to his doctrines in the main, and to the conclusions at which he arrives, we yield our hearty assent. As soon as the members of Congress shall have arranged every thing for the Presidential succession, our commercial relations with foreign powers will, we may reasonably hope, engage their attention. We

tell them in all friendliness and with all respect, and we tell all others to whom the maritime interests of the country are committed, whether at home or abroad, that if they would meet the expectations of their constituents whose bread they eat, these interests must—aye, *must*—receive more of their attention. The belief is prevalent and increasing among merchants and ship-owners, that their pursuits and property are not sufficiently cared for, and something must be done by our public functionaries to satisfy them. Mr. Kennedy has given to them, and to the nation at large, the results of his investigations as to their grievances, and has pronounced that their complaints are just, and that the policy which is injuring them should be modified, if not essentially changed. He, too, whose reasoning powers are excelled by none, before whose piercing vision fallacy vanishes like mist before the sun at noon-tide, and whose arguments opponents never overthrow and seldom reply to, in a speech at the place of Mr. Kennedy's home, has deliberately pronounced the same opinion.\* If they, if others who hold this opinion, are in error, let those who think so, and who profess to believe that all is now right with our trade and tonnage, show *their* facts and arguments as clearly and intelligibly, as those of a contrary character have been made to appear in the Report of the Committee of Commerce, and in the Speech at Baltimore. The principal facts on which the Report and Speech are based, may be found in the annual Treasury Report on Commerce and Navigation, and are therefore open to the examination of all who are interested to know, whether they are carefully and honestly used to sustain the views which each present to the consideration of the American people. None, then, need to be misled, or to trust to the authority or opinion of others. The questions which are derived from these statistics must be met and disposed of; and doubt, uncertainty, instability, and insecurity will exist until there shall be some adjustment of them.

If all other aid is denied to our merchants, we may at least ask, in their name, that the enactments which require their ships to be built in their own yards, upon our own soil,

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\* It may be proper to guard against misconception by the remark, that the reference of the text (both here and elsewhere) to Mr. Webster's Speech at Baltimore, is to that part of it only which discusses the existing system of Reciprocity Treaties.

and to be manned principally with American citizens, may be stricken from the statute-book. If the government shall determine, after a full hearing, that American vessels must continue to compete, under an unchanged policy, with foreign vessels which are constructed of wood that costs less, by labor that is cheaper, and of iron, duck, and cordage, that pay no duties ; then, it surely will be but fair, that Americans as well as foreigners shall own and employ such vessels in which to carry off our surplus products. There is wrong — and, we had almost said, outrage — in an arrangement which places side by side, and on an equality, at Savannah and New Orleans, the ships built at Medford and New York, and those built at St. John's and Halifax ; and it should come to an end. But if there is to be no change in any of our commercial relations, let our laws so stand, that foreign vessels may come to our ports for sale, and that our merchants may go abroad and purchase, wherever ships are to be procured for the least money. And let there be no discrimination in seamen ; but let those be employed, of whatever tongue, who will work the cheapest, and for the fewest necessaries and comforts. All this done, let success crown the efforts of those who shall make the best use of skill, time, and outfits, be their flag what it may. The day *was*, when American navigation received preferences at the hands of the government which was founded in order to afford it adequate protection ; but the day *is*, when we can say its owners will be grateful, if they can be placed on the same footing as their competitors from the British colonies and the Hanseatic cities. We use strong language ; but the occasion admits of it. What is talked of by every ship-owner, from Eastport to Baltimore, shall be repeated here. If we are rightly advised, Mr. Kennedy was deprived of the opportunity of giving to his associates at Washington the views and reasonings which were withheld from his Report, in the hope that they might go out to the country in the more popular form of a speech. We will do our humble part, at least, to make them more widely known.

This article is already of a wearisome length, and we must hasten to a conclusion. But as exaggerated accounts of the extent of our foreign trade are current, we will add a remark or two to show, that the state of our commerce with continental Europe, France excepted, furnishes no cause of con-

gratulation. The truth is, that our trade with all foreign countries employs something less than one third part of our tonnage ; and, taking the amount which arrives annually from places foreign to the United States as the basis of a calculation, we arrive at the following results : that full one half of the amount thus arriving enters from places and ports under British dominion ; that a half enters from nations, islands, and colonies, in our own hemisphere ; that a twelfth enters from France and her possessions ; while the *aggregate* from Russia, Prussia, Sweden, Holland, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Madeira, Italy, Sicily, Austria, Turkey, and the Hanse Towns, is not quite one tenth.\*

Of the foreign tonnage which arrives in the United States, three fourths are from places under the British flag ; five eighths are from the countries and islands of North and South America ; one twenty-third part is from France and her possessions ; one thirty-seventh part is from Spain and her colonies ; while from the Hanse Towns, the amount is greater than from all the remaining powers of Europe taken together.

The British trade with those parts of Europe, and with some other countries, with which ours is inconsiderable, is in some instances large, and in others, immense ; as will be seen from the following comparisons. Of about fifteen hundred ships which were cleared at St. Petersburg in 1830, more than one half were British, and only one in thirty-two was American ; and of those that were at Odessa the same year, one hundred and forty-seven were British, and but two were American. Of more than five thousand and seven hundred vessels, which arrived in the different ports of the Russian empire in 1832, considerably more than one fifth were from the British dominions in Europe, and only one in three hundred and thirty-six was from the United States. In 1833, there were at St. Petersburg alone about seven hundred British ships, and but one eleventh as many of ours ;

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\* The Committee on Commerce arrange our trade with foreign nations and their dependencies, so far as imports *from* and exports *to* them are concerned, in the following order. In the amount of tonnage employed, the rank is different. 1st, Great Britain ; 2d, France ; 3d, Spain ; 4th, Mexico ; 5th, Brazil ; 6th, China ; 7th, The Hanse Towns ; 8th, The Netherlands ; 9th, Russia ; 10th, Denmark ; 11th, Sweden and Norway ; 12th, Chili ; 13th, Venezuela ; 14th, Belgium ; 15th, Italy ; 16th, Hayti ; 17th, Sicily ; 18th, Portugal ; 19th, Turkey ; 20th, Austria ; 21st, Texas ; 22d, The Cisalpine Republic ; 23d. The Argentine Republic ; and 24th, Peru.

and of almost six thousand vessels “despatched” from Russia in 1838, more than one third (364,000 tons) belonged to Great Britain, and less than one in eighty (22,000 tons) to “North America.”

The relative commerce of the two countries with Portugal presents similar results. In 1828, seven hundred British vessels were employed in the Portuguese trade, and they carried to Portugal merchandise worth twelve millions of dollars; while four years afterwards, our exports to that kingdom and all her dominions were only one fortieth part of that amount. At present, Portugal obtains the greater part of her supply of rice and tobacco from Brazil, and of codfish from Newfoundland. In truth, that British colony has furnished her with more than ten millions of quintals of this kind of fish during the last forty years; and in 1840, two hundred vessels were engaged in the business of transporting it to her markets for consumption. Of the whole number of foreign ships which enter and leave Lisbon and Oporto, we possess no certain information. But we do know, that though the first-named city is admirably situated for commerce, and formerly owned as many as four hundred ships, of the average burden of four hundred tons, the number and size have been reduced quite two thirds; and that its foreign trade is no longer in the control of its own merchants; and we know also, that though one hundred and seventy-nine British vessels (25,755 tons) were entered at Oporto in 1840, there were but ten (1,524 tons) of American during the same year.

So, too, in the trade of Naples. This kingdom receives annually of British subjects, fifty thousand quintals of dried, and nine thousand casks of pickled fish, besides cotton goods and yarns worth a million and a half of dollars, and woollens of the value of a quarter of a million more. As many as thirty-six cargoes of British fish have gone to Naples in a single year, and, while the whole number of vessels from Great Britain and her colonies which were entered at the Neapolitan ports in 1835 was one hundred and twelve, (14,865 tons,) the American flag was displayed but from one vessel, of two hundred and ten tons.

Our commerce with Prussia is quite insignificant, but that of Great Britain is large and valuable. In 1828, when only seven American vessels entered the Prussian ports, the

aggregate of British and Hanoverian tonnage was two hundred and six thousand. Nor has our trade increased since, for we find our tonnage in 1832 set down at less than five hundred, and in 1840 at less than six hundred, or less than one thirtieth of the British and Hanoverian for twelve years previously.

As with Prussia, so with Turkey. More British vessels were employed in 1836, on the Danube alone, than were entered at our custom-houses from all Turkey in 1840 ; and though the former flag covered the sea of Marmora prior to the year first named, ours had rarely been seen there. As far back as 1825, British manufacturers exported to the Turkish empire fourteen millions of yards of cotton cloth, and nearly half a million pounds of cotton twist ; and in 1831, the export of the first had increased nearly one hundred per cent., and of the last four hundred per cent. ; while our whole dealings were too small to be computed.

What is the condition of things in the trade of the Baltic ? This is a sore question, and though enough has been said upon it, perhaps, in the extracts which we have given from the Report of the Committee on Commerce, we shall give a few figures to show, that could our navigators obtain a proper share of it, our countrymen would be great gainers. We may premise, that the amount of our tonnage engaged in it, instead of increasing, as it ought to do, under the state of the imports and exports, has diminished nearly one third within the last eighteen years, and that, from present indications, it will decrease still more. The policy of "reciprocity" with the States on the Baltic is, as has been remarked, "as if two neighbours, one of immense landed estate, and the other the possessor of a single acre, should agree to exercise the right of pasturage in common." We have already shown, that in the trade with several of the countries with which we have treaties of "reciprocity," the amount of British shipping far exceeds that of the United States ; and we are now to see the same result again. The number of ships belonging to Great Britain and Ireland, which passed Elsinore, going and returning, in 1831, was 4,772, while the number which belonged to the United States was 179. In 1837, the vessels of both flags were less than in 1831 ; but still, the number of British was 3,417, (655,447 tons,) while of American it was only 104, (26,250 tons.) In 1839,

there arrived at Hamburg from Great Britain fourteen hundred and ninety vessels, and from the United States, forty ; and of the vessels of all flags which arrived at that city during that year, the proportion of British was almost one half ; of American, about one eightieth. We have no need to pursue this topic further ; but we cannot refrain from asking how it has happened, that while we have “reciprocity” conventions with Sweden, Denmark, and Russia, and can, of course, supply them with tobacco directly and in American bottoms, they obtain it loaded with the charges of brokerage and transhipment from Bremen ! If we understand the matter rightly, our “reciprocity” treaty with the Hanseatic Towns has enabled this city to become — by means of its own shipping principally — one of the great European marts for the sale of this staple. And yet, though Bremen has extensive and increasing manufactories of cotton, it has not enabled us to furnish her artisans with more than 12,000 bales of the raw material annually, because British twist continues to be admitted free.

Had we time, we might compare British commerce with our own still further. The results, as ascertained, in the trade with Venezuela, with New Grenada, with Austria, and with Italy, are not dissimilar to those in the instances already cited, and we must pass them without further comment, in order to devote a moment to the intercourse of the two countries with Morocco and Brazil. Of the trade with Morocco, Great Britain may be said to enjoy the monopoly. In 1839, only three vessels (600 tons) arrived in that kingdom from the United States ; but of British, there were two hundred and fifty-three (13,664 tons,) and, while the aggregate of British imports and exports was four millions of dollars, the sum of ours was only one twenty-fifth as much ; and in 1841, it was still less. With Brazil, the disparity, all things considered, is still greater. Great Britain, for the sake of her coffee colonies, taxes Brazilian coffee and sugar ; but we take annually coffee and hides worth five millions of dollars, on which we impose no duty ; and sugar, of the value of half a million or thereabouts, on which we lay an impost of two and a half cents the pound weight. Still, in 1840, Brazil received American products to the amount of two and a quarter millions of dollars only ; while of British merchandise, she took full ten times that value.

In instituting the preceding comparison between our own foreign commerce and that of the people from whom we derived our origin, we would not be misunderstood. Towards them, of all others, we cherish no feelings of unkindness. The Mother and the Children have had conflicting interests from the earliest hour of this relationship, and it is their destiny, probably, that this rivalry shall endure to the end of their national existence. But though Englishmen and Americans have met, and must continue to meet, as competitors in the great markets of the world, an honest endeavor to outdo each other in the cheapness of goods, and in the facility of their carriage, need create no angry strife between them. Skill, energy, perseverance, and sagacity are to be admired wherever they are found ; and in what we have said, our motive has been not to provoke feelings of hostility, but to show rather what these qualities have done for the advancement of British navigation and trade.

Whatever the windings and turnings of British politics may be, — unlike ours in one respect — ships and shops are never overlooked or forgotten. In or out of place and power, an English statesman never has been able to excuse himself to his constituents, if he wavered in his course as to the promotion of the industry of the kingdom, or slackened his zeal to devise employments for its tonnage, and to seek out new customers for its manufactures. His accountability is a just one, and the American people ought to hold their rulers to the same.

At a future time, we may discuss at greater length some of the questions which we have now but briefly and imperfectly considered, and with reference to a remedy for the evils of which we have complained. In the early days of the Republic, and before the spirit of party — its fell curse — had distorted the vision, poisoned the minds, and misled the judgment of our prominent men, Mr. Jefferson observed that “Free commerce and navigation are not to be given for restrictions and vexations ; nor are they likely to produce a relaxation of them.” Experience, we think, has shown the wisdom of the sentiment ; and should we resume the subject of our commercial policy, it will be our purpose to present the exact “restrictions and vexations” which have been, and still are, meted out to us, in exchange for the “free commerce and navigation” which we have tendered, and continue to tender, to all nations.